

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8158
INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
USMISSION UN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L MASERU 0277

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

FROM AMBASSADOR NORLAND

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, LT, SF (NAMIBIA)
SUBJECT: PRIMIN JONATHAN DISCUSSES NAMIBIA/SOUTHWEST AFRICA

REF: MASERU 0245,

1. SUMMARY. DURING MY CONVERSATION WITH PRIMIN LEABUA JONATHAN ON JANUARY 26, PRIMIN DISCOURSED AT SOME LENGTH ON NAMIBIA. HE STRESSED THE NEED FOR A FIRMER STANCE BY THE WESTERN POWERS, INCLUDING THE NEED TO DEMAND A TOTAL WITHDRAWAL OF ALL SOUTH AFRICAN FORCES INCLUDING THE POLICE. IN THIS AND OTHER AREAS, HE WAS SUPPORTIVE OF SWAPO AND NUJOMA. END SUMMARY.

2. THE PRIMIN SAID HE SUPPORTS THE FIVE-POWER TALKS WITH THE SAG ON SOUTHWEST AFRICA. THE SAG HAD NO RIGHT TO BE IN NAMIBIA
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WHICH SHOULD LONG AGO HAVE HAD INDEPENDENCE. HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND THE DELAY IN ACHIEVING INDEPENDENCE FOR NAMIBIA. IN HIS VIEW THE WESTERN POWERS ARE "BECOMING TOO SOFT" WITH SAG IN HANDLING THE ISSUE. ONE CAN "UNDERSTAND, IF NOT EXCUSE", SOUTH AFRICAN EXPLANATIONS WITH RESPECT TO THIS OR THAT INTERNAL MATTER, HE SAID; ONE CANNOT UNDERSTAND WITH REGARD TO NAMIBIA WHERE SOUTH AFRICA HAS NO GROUNDS FOR ITS PRESENCE.

3. AT THIS POINT THE PRIMIN SAID HE WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR AN EXPLANATION OF THE DELAYS IN NEGOTIATING ON SWA AND CAUSED FOR THE NAMIBIAN INDEPENDENCE. I TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO OUTLINE FOR THE PRIMIN THE BACKGROUND OF DISTRUST AND THREE SPECIFIC PROBLEMS; SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY PRESENCE, RELEASE OF PRISONERS AND DATE FOR ELECTIONS. AT THE CONCLUSION THE PRIMIN ASKED AGAIN WHY SOUTH AFRICA COULD REFUSE TO WITHDRAW ITS TROOPS. HE AGREED WITH SWAPO ON THE NEED FOR TOTAL WITHDRAWAL OF SAG FORCES PRIOR TO ELECTIONS. HE ALSO FELT NUJOMA'S INSISTENCE ON THE REMOVAL OF SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE WAS FULLY JUSTIFIED. SWAPO PRISONERS IN TANZANIA WOULD HAVE TO BE FREED ALONG WITH THE REST.

4. REPLYING TO THE PRIMIN'S QUESTION RE SOUTH AFRICAN REFUSAL TO ACCEPT COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL OF ITS POLICE AND MILITARY FORCES, I NOTED SAG, IN DEFIANCE OF WORLD OPINION, BASES ITS POSITION ON THEIR DE FACTO PRESENCE AND ITS BELIEF IN THE NEED TO PROTECT THE WHITE POPULATION FROM INTIMIDATION DURING ANY ELECTIONS. THE PRIMIN REPLIED EMPHATICALLY THAT I SHOULD REPORT TO WASHINGTON THE GOL VIEW "THAT NOT A SINGLE SOUTH AFRICAN SOLDIER OR POLICEMAN OUGHT TO REMAIN IN SWA". THE SOUTH AFRICAN FORCES THERE ARE ALREADY INTIMIDATING BLACKS WHILE LABELING NUJOMA AS A THREAT TO FUTURE WHITE ACCESS TO THE POLLS. IT IS SOUTH AFRICAN FORCES THAT WILL INTIMIDATE, BRIBE AND CORRUPT IF PERMITTED TO REMAIN IN SWA DURING ELECTIONS.

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5. I EXPLAINED TO THE PRIMIN THAT ANY EFFORT TO PUSH SOUTH AFRICA TO ACCEPT TOTAL WITHDRAWAL WOULD LIKELY FAIL. THE PROPOSAL FOR A REDUCED SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY PRESENCE LIMITED THE LOCATION AND MOBILITY OF THESE FORCES; THEY WOULD NOT BE FREE TO MOVE ABOUT IN THE COUNTRY. I EMPHASIZED TOO THAT THE WESTERN FIVE ARE PROPOSING A LARGE UN OBSERVER FORCE, IN NUMBER AS GREAT OR GREATER THAN THE SOUTH AFRICAN FORCES THAT WOULD BE PERMITTED TO REMAIN.

6. THE PRIMIN REPLIED THAT, WITHOUT BELABORING THE POINT, THE BASOTHO KNOW WHAT THE SOUTH AFRICANS WILL DO. FROM LONG EXPERIENCE WITH THEIR NEIGHBORS, THEY ARE CONVINCED THAT EVEN IF ONLY A HANDFUL OF SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE OR MILITARY ARE ALLOWED TO REMAIN IN NAMIBIA, THEY WOULD CARRY OUT THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT'S STRONG-ARM WORK. THE PRIMIN SAID GOL WILL FOLLOW WITH CONCERN THE NEW YORK TALKS ON NAMIBIA WHILE REMAINING CONCERNED ABOUT THE CONTINUING DELAY IN RESOLVING THE SWA SITUATION.
STOKES

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